

EUGENIUS:

OR,

ANECDOTES

OF THE

GOLDEN VALE:

AN EMBELLISHED NARRATIVE OF
REAL FACTS.

Extremum hunc, Arethusa, mihi concede laborem.

VIRG.

V O L. II.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY, PALL MALL.

M.DCC.LXXXV.

EUGENIUS

ATHECOTES

GOLDEN VALLEY



1807

PRINTED BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD

1807

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EUGENIUS:

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Anecdotes of the Golden Vale.

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CHAP. I.

I OBSERVED (continued Eugenius,

resuming his narrative) that all the

civilities and polite attentions of Mr.

Hamilton's family were lost upon me;

while my thoughts were roving to-

wards the residence of Flora Williams,

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at

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at the other extremity of the Golden Vale. But the next morning at breakfast, as if they had penetrated the inmost recesses of my heart, I was agreeably surprised with the sight of Miss Williams, whom I found they had invited to spend the day there. Nor was I less surprised to see her, and the two eldest Miss Hamiltons, with bouquets, or small nosegays, of a single sprig of myrtle, jessamy, and a rose-bud, exactly similar, in their bosoms; and Miss Louisa Hamilton, the youngest, with a wreath of flowers round her head. But I was soon informed that it was Miss Louisa's birth-day, and was to be observed as a festival.

Upon these occasions, every thing,

I found, had an air of festivity. The servants remitted something of their usual employments, and partook of the cheerfulness of the day, by contributing somewhat relative to the occasion. The gardener (besides the proper supplies of herbs, and other olitory productions, for the kitchen) had brought the nosegays for the young ladies; and whilst we were at breakfast (for which the housekeeper had provided some of her nicest rolls) the butler came in with an uncommonly fine trout, which he had caught with angling. The young gentlemen were gone out with their guns; and one of the farmers daughters had come with some kind of present from the dairy.

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The whole morning was spent in an agreeable loiter;—either at the harpsichord, accompanied with their voices; or producing favourite passages from books in the library; or sauntering on the lawn, or in a little shrubbery of evergreens contiguous to the house,—where I had, more than once, an opportunity of whispering to Miss Williams the soft dictates of my passion; which, I flattered myself, were not unkindly received,—though not without some little jealous hints of the more agreeable objects which I had to converse with at Mr. Hamilton's.

When the usual dinner hour approached, the ladies separated from us, to alter their dress, as I imagined;
when

when Mr. Hamilton proposed to me to take a little walk in an adjacent wood, notwithstanding the heat of the day, whilst the servant was laying the cloth.

We took a little circuit of about a quarter of a mile, and then walked slanting up the hill by the side of a wood, where I had never had the curiosity to walk before; because I knew the top of the hill was terminated by a wild, barren heath.

When we had ascended about half way up the hill, we got over a rough stile, which Mr. Hamilton said would lead us back towards the house. Accordingly we went winding down a narrow path, for near half a quarter of a

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mile, till we came to a level part of the wood; when, turning short to the right—*eloquar, an fiteam?*—how shall I express my astonishment, at finding myself in a little amphitheatre of lofty oaks, at the extremity of which was a rustic building of rough stones, near twenty feet long, and of depth sufficient to contain a long table, where ten or a dozen people might conveniently dine.

Here I with pleasure beheld all the company assembled, and a very elegant dinner of six or seven dishes, part hot and part cold, waiting for our arrival. A clear spring, conducted probably with some little art, fell murmuring down a rock at the side of the Druid

Hall (as Mr. Hamilton had named it), and then ran winding through some rough stones by the side of the amphitheatre, and lost itself amongst the flags, and other aquatic plants.

Miss Louisa Hamilton, as the lady of the feast, was seated in a distinguished place; her sisters, and Miss Williams, on each side of her. But I was so lost in admiration, that I did not perceive, till they burst into a laugh, that young Williams was returned, and had brought his aunt, Mrs. Banks, as an addition to the assembly; he having rode near forty miles that morning, determined to pay this compliment to the family. On Mr. Hamilton's lamenting that Williams could

not prevail on his father or mother to accompany them, he made their proper apologies, and we took our seats at the table.

My cousin, I remember, as the lady of the night, was seated in a distinguished place; but I did not perceive, till they burst into a laugh, that young Williams was returned, and had brought his aunt, Mrs. Banks, as an addition to the assembly; he having rode near forty miles that morning, determined to pay this compliment to the family. On Mr. Hamilton's lameness, and Williams could

C H A P. II.

THE servants were preparing to remove the dishes, and make way for the dessert, when we were greatly surprised and alarmed at the firing of two guns, and instantly a brace of pointers crossed the amphitheatre: and, whilst we were expressing our astonishment, and some little resentment, at this rude behaviour of whoever the sportsmen might be, that trespassed thus upon Mr. Hamilton's premises, two young people presented themselves in shooting dresses, in such a

questionable shape, that it was impossible to determine, by their first appearance, whether they were gentlemen, or their servants.

The moment they came in sight, they made a full stop, expressive of the utmost surprize; and one of them, turning to his comrade, cries out—
 “Z—ds! Harry, here’s better game than what we are in pursuit of.”—
 “Sir,” says Mr. Hamilton (a little offended, though the intrusion was certainly involuntary) “this is not *lawful game*, but private property; and I am sure you are more of gentlemen than to think of plundering a poor farmer’s poultry yard:—you had better, therefore, pursue your wild
 game,

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game, which I believe are just flown over the wood.

The young men were a little dismayed, and stood silently surveying the company for a moment—unwilling to depart, and yet at a loss how to introduce themselves. When Mr. Hamilton, perceiving their embarrassment, said, if they would accept of a glass of wine, or any refreshment, they were extremely welcome.

One of them, who seemed to be some years older than the other, plucked his companion by the sleeve, as an hint to retire: but the young one said, “Faith, I’ll not refuse so obliging an offer;”—and immediately approached, bowing (almost mechanically) to

Miss Louisa Hamilton, as to the divinity of the place.

They each of them took a slice of ham, and the limb of a fowl; and as they perceived the company had dined, sent away their plates, called for a glass of wine, and drank an health to the company:—and being informed of the occasion of this appearance of festivity, they each called for another full glass, and drank Miss Louisa Hamilton's health with a particular emphasis, and with the usual good wishes on such occasions.

The butler was now clearing the table, when two more sportsmen came up; the one in a livery jacket, and the other in a frock. The elder of our interlopers called the servant in livery, and

and bade him go down to the inn at the sea-port, and let them know that they should be there in an hour's time. His young companion, however, said that was uncertain; and calling the other servant, who was out of livery—"James," says he, in a low voice, "let the landlord know that we have dined, and probably may not be there till towards the evening."—"Yes, Sir Charles," says the fellow, bowing with great respect.

We now perceived that our visitors were of no vulgar rank; and the young ladies began to bridle up, and give each other significant glances—pleasing themselves with the thoughts of having some male partners for the intended

intended dance. Mr. Hamilton, however, knew too much of the world, to be much pleased with this accidental rencounter; though he politely invited the young gentlemen to stay and partake of their afternoon's amusement. This offer was gladly accepted by the young baronet, notwithstanding some few scruples raised by the sage Mentor, his discreet friend and companion.

C H A P. III.

MR. Hamilton now informed us, that we should be presented with a somewhat laughable scene, but that his wife had some good-natured design in it. Accordingly the gardener appeared with a fine melon, attended by three little boys, and as many girls, neatly dressed in their plain rustic habits, a little ornamented, each with a small dessert basket of different kinds of fruit; which having placed on the table, they ranged themselves, two and two, in the middle of the wood,

wood, and were set in motion by a Welch harp, with a tabor and pipe, and danced *Of a noble Race was Shen-kin, Nancy Dawson*, and one or two easy dances more, in very true time. Mrs. Hamilton then called them to her, and gave each of them, suited to their age; and dismissed them and their music (which were afterwards to attend at our ball) to dine with the servants. This, we found, was one of Mrs. Hamilton's instruments of government for her little seminaries, to encourage them in their working and reading, by admitting half a dozen at each festival; and no punishment was more dreaded by them, than the being excluded from this honour.

By

By the time we had drank a glass or two of wine round, the music returned, accompanied by the butler, who played a tolerable fiddle; and we were all impatient to begin dancing.

Mr. Hamilton therefore said, their etiquette required that the young lady, whose birth-day was celebrated, should open the ball; and made the two strangers the compliment of leading her out. The elder declining it, the young baronet, making an apology for his dress, immediately offered his hand, and performed in a manner that did no discredit to such a partner, or to his dancing-master. He then offered his hand to the eldest Miss Hamilton, and the other ladies; but all of them seemed

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seemed more inclined to begin country dances.

Accordingly Sir Charles again stood up with Miss Louisa; the other stranger, either by design or through mistake, took out Miss Caroline; and as young Williams could not dance with his sister, nor young Hamilton with his, the former took out Miss Hamilton, and the latter, out of politeness, took Jenny Gradoc, and left Flora Williams to my ardent wishes.

Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton, Mrs. Banks, and Mr. Jackson from the manufactory (who had been invited upon a supposition that he would be wanted for dancing) made a party at whist.

We continued dancing, with a few pauses,

pauses, till after seven o'clock, when
 we were summoned to tea and coffee in
 the Druid Hall : after which the young
 people proposed to resume their coun-
 try dances ; but Mrs. Hamilton at once
 put a negative upon our proposal, and
 said, though she was herself always
 passionately fond of dancing, and had
 encouraged it not only in her own fa-
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 as a genteel amusement, and a healthy
 exercise ; and that it ceased to be such
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 strangers also said it was absolutely ne-
 cessary for them to retire to their quar-
 ters ;

ters; and, with some difficulty, prevailed on his reluctant comrade to take his leave.

the third Hall: after which the people proposed to resume their conversations; but Mrs. Hamilton at once put a negative upon our proposal, and said, though she was herself always passionately fond of dancing, and had encouraged it not only in her own family, but even amongst the young people in the village, yet it was only as a general amusement, and a healthy exercise; and that it tended to be both when pursued to excess, and fatigued and injured, instead of strengthening, the constitution. The object of the two strangers who said it was absolutely necessary for them to retire to their dear

C H A P. IV.

THE next morning, soon after breakfast, we were not much surprised to see Sir Charles Highworth and Mr. Strickland (which we had now learnt were the names of these young strangers); who had taken advantage of the custom which then prevailed, to come and enquire after the health of their partners. This was no more than common civility;—yet Sir Charles was so particularly attentive to Miss Louisa Hamilton, and extended the morning visit to such a

6 length

length (notwithstanding the hints, the nods, and winks of Mr. Strickland) that it was easy to observe a kindling passion; which, though in its infancy, made a rapid progress, and seemed to promise a violent attachment.

Miss Louisa, though she had a fine person, and a strikingly expressive countenance, yet, in a public place, or in a large assembly, might not have attracted any particular regard. But being so unexpectedly discovered in so retired a situation, and in so small a circle—and perhaps the little distinction which the particular occasion had given her—all these circumstances seemed to have operated in her favour,

and

and made her the object of uncommon admiration with our young baronet.—

And this is worth the attention of those young ladies, who are so fond of exhibiting their charms, morning, noon, and night, at every place of public resort, either at Bath, Tunbridge, or in the Metropolis.

After several efforts to get loose from the charms of Miss Louisa Hamilton, Sir Charles at length made his last bow, and Mr. Strickland took a final leave; as he said their time was expired, and that they must necessarily set off for ———shire the next morning.

About the middle of the next day, however, we were not a little surprised
at

at the sight of Sir Charles's valet; who came with a note to young Mr. Hamilton, to inform him, that, in walking from Mr. Hamilton's down to the sea-port, he had had the misfortune to sprain his foot to such a degree, that he was afraid he should not be able to get on horseback for some days; and that as Mr. Strickland was obliged to be at home in two days, he had left him quite alone, and without so much as a book of any kind to amuse him. He begged, therefore, that he would present his best respects to the family, and particularly to the young ladies, and entreat them to lend him any sort of book, either French or English; but that "Ovid's Remedy for Love," or
else

else "Sherlock upon Death," were the books which he chiefly wanted.

Upon young Hamilton's reading the note to the company (except the very last part, as Mrs. Hamilton was present) I observed that they all cast a look at each other, except Miss Louisa; who, though she affected an unconcern, blushed like Aurora, and almost hid her face in her bosom.

The young people, upon consulting together, agreed to send the young baronet The Guardian, and a French Telemachus. The former, young Hamilton said in his answer, would teach one how to *live* in the world; and if Sir Charles was tired of life, or wanted a cure for love, he added, that the se-

venth book of Telemachus would furnish him with one; though, Mr. Hamilton said, he would not wish Sir Charles to put it in practice, notwithstanding the sea-port afforded him so tempting an opportunity.

C H A P. V.

TOWARDS the evening, young Hamilton and I took a walk down to the sea-port, as we thought it but civil to enquire after Sir Charles's health ; not to mention, that we had a curiosity to know the true state of the case, and even to be convinced of the reality of the accident.

We found him, however, with his leg really swelled ; and Dr. Daffy had just then been making use of an embrocation, as he called it, and fomenting the part affected with medicated vinegar. The

doctor said it was a very bad sprain ; but that if Sir Charles would have patience for a day or two, the sinews would soon recover their tone. We conversed half an hour with Sir Charles, and found him a very sensible, and rather modest young man, for a man of the world :—for though he had been bred, the two last years before he went to the University, at Winchester school, he had not contracted that intrepid air and petulance, which too many young men discover, who have been hackneyed from their very infancy in some of our public seminaries.

We took our leave, with young Hamilton's inviting Sir Charles, when his complaint would give him leave, to
visit

visit the South Rocks again before he left the country.

As we passed by Dr. Daffy's door, we asked what his private opinion was of Sir Charles's complaint. He repeated what he had said before ; but added, that if Sir Charles's friend, Mr. Strickland, would have waited one day for him, he might have gone very well in a post-chaise. " But I find," said the doctor (who seemed a good hand at intelligence) " they had a violent quarrel, as I heard from Sir Charles's valet ; who said that Mr. Strickland, though a man of some fortune, had partly the care of Sir Charles : and he says his mother and his guardian are desirous to have him

marry a young lady of a very large fortune in the neighbourhood, who will be of age next year, and is violently in love with Sir Charles; but he does not like *her*, and is very much averse to the match.

We saw nothing of Sir Charles the next day; but in answer to a card of young Mr. Hamilton's, to enquire after his health, he wrote word that his foot was much better, but that he was dying with *cummi* and melancholy, at the thought of his being within two miles of the most amiable family in the world, and without a possibility of seeing them.

The next evening, however (continued Eugenius) young Williams and
Miss

Miss Flora having walked to the South Rocks, and Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton being particularly engaged, we agreed to drink tea in the Druid Hall—and Miss Louisa was singing, at my request, the Scotch song of *Throug the Wood, Laddie*—when who should appear, from the side of the grove, but the young baronet, limping with a stick, having left his horses and servant without the wood.

The company were not a little surprised, and Miss Louisa stopped short in the midst of her song; upon which Sir Charles said he would absolutely hop back again, if he was to deprive the company of their entertainment, and himself of the greatest pleasure

that music could possibly give him. Miss Louisa then, at our united entreaties, resumed her song, to which Sir Charles was all attention; and said more by his looks and sighs than any language could express.

Young Mr. Hamilton, by way of conversation, expressed his fears, that now Sir Charles was able to ride, he would probably soon leave the country; especially as his companion had left him. To which Sir Charles replied, that as he had unfortunately lost three or four days shooting, he would willingly stay some time longer, and make it up.—“As for Strickland,” says the baronet, “he pretended to be engaged, and I could not prevail upon

upon him to wait till I was able to travel."

After tea, we naturally separated into parties. As Sir Charles seemed to address himself particularly to Miss Louisa Hamilton, young Williams got into a conversation with the eldest Miss Hamilton, and left his sister Flora and Miss Caroline to me and young Hamilton; who amused ourselves with seeing Miss Caroline finish a sketch of the South Rocks, which she had promised me, and which the reader may see engraved in the frontispiece to the first volume of this narrative. I confess, however, that while I was so near, and even leaning over her shoulder, all inanimate beauties appeared uninteresting

resting and insipid, in comparison with the animated charms of the blooming Flora Williams.

We continued in the Druid Hall till the evening grew very cool, when with some reluctance the young baronet got to his horses, and took his leave; having, as we after learned, made a formal declaration of his violent passion for Miss Louisa Hamilton; and expressing his astonishment, that, after having been somewhat in public life, he should thus accidentally discover, in the mountains of North Wales, the only woman with whom he could ever be happy.

Miss Louisa's education, and the principles which she had imbibed from

such

such excellent parents, left her not under the least difficulty of making a proper reply to so precipitate a declaration.

—She acknowledged the honour he did her; but that she could not possibly listen to an overture of that kind, without the previous knowledge of their respective friends. That Sir Charles was very young, as well as herself, and that they were almost strangers to each other; and whatever good opinion she might have conceived of him, she had been taught never to yield blindly to first impressions.

Sir Charles answered, that he should be entirely his own master in a twelve-month's time; and only wished he

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might meet with no impediment from Miss Hamilton or her friends, and he should be the happiest man in the universe.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

WE were just set down to breakfast the next morning, when we were again surprised at Sir Charles Highworth being announced; who made an apology for repeating his visit so soon, but said he was come now, in good earnest, to take his leave; having received a letter from Lady Highworth, his mother, that she was so ill as to be confined to her room, and expected him to return with the servant who brought the letter.

We soon learned, from what passed
in

in the servants hall, that Mr. Strickland, who knew the family intentions with regard to Sir Charles, had acquainted Lady Highworth with the violent passion which he observed him to have conceived for Miss Louisa Hamilton; and that Lady Highworth, who was really in an ill state of health, had immediately dispatched their old trusty house-steward, with positive orders to bring home the young baronet at any rate, either on horseback or in a post-chaise, as he should be able to travel.

When Sir Charles was taking his leave, Mr. Hamilton said (as words of course) that they should be glad to hear that he had quite recovered from
his

his lameness. Upon which Sir Charles said he should take the liberty to write to young Mr. Hamilton, and should always be happy to hear of the welfare of the family; and that he did not despair of having another week's shooting on the mountains before the season expired. He then reluctantly withdrew; earnestly wishing, but thro' delicacy dreading, to take a particular farewell of Miss Louisa Hamilton, whose colour, changing alternately from a deadly paleness to a crimson blush, discovered her delicate feelings, and her apprehensions of betraying them to those who had long since observed them.

C H A P. VII.

I HAD now been more than a week at Mr. Hamilton's; and tho' they endeavoured, by the politest attention, to make every thing not only agreeable but delightful to me, yet I still languished to return to Mr. Williams's, where the treasure of my heart resided.

The morning before I left the South Rocks, having risen an hour before breakfast, and taken a walk by the river side, I met a poor man, who was going in a great hurry to Mr. Hamilton's,

ton's, and who said he had been sent to the preceding night, but was from home; and he added that he came thus early, because the servant had left word that Mr. Hamilton had some good news to communicate to him. Upon further enquiry, the man informed me, that they had a relation died *beyond sea*, in *Portingal*, and that he had left above a thousand pounds behind him; and though he and his family were his heirs, that they had no chance of getting it, if the Squire had not undertaken it for them: and he was in hopes that now they should have two or three hundred pounds a-piece, as there were only two brothers and a sister, who were his heirs at law.

This

This incident increased my veneration for Mr. Hamilton, from whom I never had nor should have heard the least hint of the matter.

Indeed the more I saw of him and Mrs. Hamilton, the more reason I had to love and esteem them. Their whole study was to make not only their own family, but every one around them, as happy as it was in their power; and to discharge their duty, in every relation of life, not merely with fidelity, but with *generosity*. They had hardly a servant in the family, whose love and reverence Mr. Hamilton had not engaged by acts of kindness, and by convincing them that he had their interest at heart. Indeed Mr. and Mrs.

Hamilton

Hamilton were great advocates for servants in general; and were of opinion that the too common complaint, of the baseness and ingratitude of that set of people, had its origin in the improper treatment of their masters or mistresses, either by too haughty or too remiss a management of them—by menacing or chiding them upon the most frivolous occasions—and sometimes, it was to be feared, by setting them vicious examples.

As to his children, Mr. Hamilton treated them upon a footing of equality and friendship; and their love for their parents was the surest pledge of their obedience: they took a pleasure in obliging them, and their greatest happiness

pinels was to make their father and mother happy.

Mr. Hamilton, in his turn, studied daily not only to instruct and improve, but to please and amuse, his young people. He remembered with pleasure the most trifling recreations of his youth; and enjoyed them afresh in partaking them in company with, and observing the effects of them upon, his young family. They read a play together; they angled, or sailed down the water in a little pleasure boat; or strolled about the woods and rocks together, and collected simples and wild flowers, and descanted upon their beauties, or reduced them to their botanical arrangements, by Mr. Hamilton's assistance,

ance, who was ignorant of hardly any branch of science.

Thus their whole time in the country was spent in health and ease, innocence and cheerfulness. In the depth of winter (especially if it proved very severe) they sometimes spent a month in lodgings at Shrewsbury, which abounds with as many genteel families, and gentlemen of a liberal education, as most provincial towns in England. And as Mr. Hamilton had relations in the neighbourhood of London—where he himself had lived before he came into Wales, and where a considerable part of his property lay—he generally took one or two of the young ladies with him, in their turns, for a month ;
which

which furnished the family with sufficient knowledge of the polite world, and with the prevailing topics and transactions of fashionable life.

I returned from my walk before the family were assembled to breakfast, but with pleasure found young Williams come to attend me to his father's house; Miss (Anne) Hamilton being in the breakfast room, with whom he seemed engaged in an interesting conversation, though Jenny Gradoc was standing at the window, intent upon some piece of needle-work. Indeed I had long suspected that Williams had a great partiality for Miss Hamilton; but, as she seemed to be rather more conscious of her superiority, in point
of

of family and education, to the generality of their neighbours, I thought her the least likely to listen with a favourable ear to any overtures from young Williams. Whether I was mistaken or not, will appear in the sequel.

C H A P. VIII.

WHEN I parted from Mr. Hamilton, he politely expressed his desire that we might be together as much as was agreeable or convenient to me whilst I stayed in the country.

When we were alone, I rallied young Williams upon his apparent attachment to the eldest Miss Hamilton; and added, that she did not seem displeased with his addresses. He replied, that nothing but common chit-chat had ever passed between them: neither did he

he imagine that she would admit of, nor could he think of making, any overtures of the kind which I hinted at; though nothing would make him more happy—and he had more than once heard Mr. Hamilton say, that he should not be sorry to see either of his daughters married to a country clergyman, with moderate preferment, and some little independent fortune; under which description I hope myself some time or other to be ranked:—and as the Miss Hamiltons, I believe, will not have above £. 3000 a-piece, my father might enable me to make an adequate settlement.—From hence it was obvious to infer, that some project of that kind had employed young Williams's meditations.

I told him, however, my sentiments :—that he would surely have more difficulties to contend with in Miss Hamilton, than either in Miss Caroline or Louisa.

He thought the contrary; as Miss Hamilton was nearer his own age, and though equally sensible and agreeable, yet from her external appearance he thought her less marketable than her sisters, and therefore more likely to listen to any proposals from him :—“ and,” adds he, “ from the little knowledge I have had of the sex, I should not be discouraged by that stateliness and reserve, which you once remarked; as I have generally found the most demure the most amorous; and the most

haughty will not scruple to bow before the altars of Love."

When we got to Mr. Williams's, I ran with eagerness into the parlour, and found Miss Flora alone.—She had her work-basket on the table, but had been reading a play, which she endeavoured to conceal: I snatched it from her, however, and found it to be Otway's Orphan; which opened of itself in the second act, and this passage was marked with a pencil—

——It was not kind

To leave me like a turtle here alone,

To droop and mourn the absence of my mate.

When thou art from me, every place is desert,

And I, methinks, am savage and forlorn.

Sc. iii.

D 2

Poor

Poor Flora blushed, and said it was not her book, but Molly's, her aunt's maid.

I do not ask whose book it is, nor who has been reading it, I replied; I only know that I have hardly looked in a book since I left you.

There only those amusement find,

That have an heart at ease.

EUPHKOS.

I suppose, says she, you certainly could not want *amusement* at the South Rocks.

No—it is quite a Paradise, said I; but I was in Adam's situation, who, though he had angels to converse with, wanted a bosom friend to make him happy.

We

We were now joined by Mrs. Banks, the aunt, and the rest of the family; and though I could not but be struck with the different oeconomy and style of life between Mr. and Mrs. Williams and the family at the South Rocks, yet I found myself rather more in my element at Mr. Williams's.

Mr. Williams, yet I was afraid of not being too far upon the hospitality of my friends, and began to think of taking my leave; especially as the summer was now almost over; and Mrs. Banks, the aunt, talked of returning soon with her niece to London.

The second day after I left Mr. Hamilton's,

C H A P. IX.

HAVING now made about three weeks visit in the Golden Vale, continued Eugenius, though I could not bear the thought of leaving Miss Williams, yet I was afraid of trespassing too far upon the hospitality of my friends, and began to think of taking my leave; especially as the summer was now almost over; and Mrs. Banks, the aunt, talked of returning soon with her niece to London.

The second day after I left Mr.
Hamilton's,

Hamilton's, we intended to have taken an evening walk to the South Rocks, to enquire after them ; but were prevented by a morning visit from young Hamilton and his sisters.

Soon after they came in, they informed us that Mr. Hamilton had heard from the governess at Shrewsbury, in relation to Jenny Cradoc—That she had received a very menacing letter from Mr. Jones's attorney, brought by Jenny's own father ; in which he threatened to ruin her, if she did not immediately produce the young woman, and all her clothes, which had been entrusted to her care—That he had sent her own father for her, and insisted upon her being delivered into

his hands.—The governess added—
That she had given the old man the
same answer which she had before
given to his wife—that their daughter
had withdrawn herself from her house,
to elude the wicked intentions of Mr.
Jones, of which she had no reason to
doubt: and though she would be the
last to encourage young people to diso-
bey their parents on slight pretences,
yet that Miss Cradoc was of an age
to chuse some other protectors, when
her father and mother were base enough
to be instrumental in the ruin of their
own child.

The old man confessed that he did
not much approve of her going to
live with the squire; but that it would
be

be the ruin of him and his family, if he should turn them out of their little farm; which he had threatened to do, if they did not persuade their daughter to return to his house, and live with him as an housekeeper.

The governess exhorted him to do his duty, and trust to Providence; but assured him, that Miss Cradoc was in safe hands, and with people that would protect her against all the world.

She concluded her letter with informing Mr. Hamilton, that the old man went away, seemingly very well satisfied in himself; but was afraid Mr. Jones would give her a great deal of trouble.

C H A P. X.

AS you may wish to know the event of this affair, continued Eugenius, I will proceed.—After many letters filled with bitter reproaches and expostulations with the governess, Mr. Millefinus Jones, who, though so scandalous in his amours (as was observed before) was not so lost to all sense of decency, as publicly to prosecute an affair of this kind, when he had reason to think that Jenny Cradoc was protected by some respectable family—which indeed the attorney whom he

he employed had investigated by a correspondent at Shrewsbury — he therefore, after writing to the governess a letter in which he still threatened her that he should take some measures to recover a daughter to her injured parents, remained totally silent.

In the mean time Mr. Jackson, the manager of the manufactory, coming frequently to Mr. Hamilton's, either upon business or as a conversable neighbour, was at last violently smitten with Jenny's charms; of which attachment compassion for her situation, he said, laid the first foundation.

Though it might have been more prudent for Jackson, as a man of business, to have looked out for some

more advantageous connection; yet, as upon enquiry Mrs. Hamilton assured him of her prudence and good disposition, he generously sacrificed all mercenary considerations to his virtuous passion for Jenny Cradoc.

Neither was Jackson's disinterested conduct entirely unrewarded. For Mr. Jones, some time after, partly from vexation perhaps, but more from too free an indulgence in the bottle, was seized with a dangerous fever; on which occasion—in some measure to atone for his intended guilt in regard to Jenny Cradoc, and partly perhaps to preserve some shew of justice with the family whom he had heard to have taken her under their protection—he

left

left her by his will five hundred pounds; and, moreover, charged the attorney who made his will, and the clergyman who attended him, to bear witness—that if he recovered, he would immediately remit Jenny Cradoc one hundred pounds of his intended legacy.

Having unburthened his conscience to his confessor—settled this affair to his satisfaction—and formed a resolution to reform his life—Providence restored him to his health; and having heard by his emissary, the attorney, that Jenny Cradoc was now actually married to a man in a creditable way of business, he made the lawyer write to her, to acquaint her with his intentions.

‘Nay,

Nay, having been informed, upon further enquiry, of Mr. Hamilton's uncommonly beneficent character—that Mrs. Hamilton had equipped Jenny Cradoc for her matrimonial adventure; and that the lady of Shrewsbury, where she first took refuge, had made her a very liberal present—Mr. Jones, being ambitious of emulating their generosity, gave her immediately two hundred pounds, out of the five which he had left her by his will:—and flattering himself that he had now somewhat retrieved his character, he was desirous of preserving it; and being more cautious of his behaviour for the future, he by degrees became really virtuous, though his utmost ambition

bition at first was only to appear so.—
Such is the prevailing influence of a
few good examples.

C H A P. XI.

IN spite of my repeated efforts to leave Mr. Williams's, I continued another week there. But having now fixed the day for my departure, young Williams and I walked to Mr. Hamilton's, that I might take a final leave of them. Upon our enquiring whether they had heard any more of the young baronet, or his friend Mr. Strickland, young Hamilton took me aside, and shewed me a letter to the following purpose :

“ Dear

“ Dear Hamilton,

“ WHEN I left your neighbourhood, I consoled myself with the hopes of seeing you soon again, and taking another week’s sport upon the mountains: but when I got home, I found my mother in so bad a state of health, that her physician had given it as his opinion, that nothing could preserve her life over the ensuing winter, but a warmer climate, and a journey to the south of France. As she wished me to attend her, I could not hesitate a moment, when my duty to so indulgent a parent was in question. Yet how do I regret the impossibility of my paying my respects to my friends at the South Rocks before I leave England!—

The

66 EUGENIUS.

The charming scene to which I was so accidentally introduced at the Druid Hall, has left an impression upon my fancy, which no distance either of place or time will ever have power to obliterate.

"Pray present my most affectionate compliments to every individual of your family. I was going to say particularly to ——— but cannot tell to whom I may be allowed to give the preference. Believe me, with the greatest regard,

Yours sincerely,

CHARLES HIGHWORTH.

"Pray favour me with your correspondence; and when we get to the Continent I will send you my address."

After

After what had before passed, no one could doubt of the tendency of this epistle.—But little stress was laid upon the transient fondness of so young a man, who was going into a scene of life where probably all his former impressions would soon be worn out. As Sir Charles mentioned nothing of Mr. Strickland in his letter, we concluded that some coldness still subsisted between them.

After spending an hour at Mr. Hamilton's, I parted from them with expressing my wishes, that I might see at least some part of the family in London in the spring, which was the part of the year that Mr. Hamilton thought the most agreeable to make an occasional

sional visit to the Metropolis; and the time, accordingly, in which he usually went thither.

I returned with young Williams, and spent an agreeable, though rather melancholy afternoon; as the thoughts of parting kept me, and I flattered myself Miss Williams, in a very pensive mood.

In the evening, as of course the conversation turned upon the time of our meeting in town, I said, with an air of raillery, that I supposed I should find Miss Flora married before that time. To which her aunt answered, with a grave face, that she had no notion of a girl's marrying before she was at years of discretion;—that this was a

very

very

very forward age, and that girls wanted to be mothers now-a-days before they were out of their childhood;—that for her part, she stayed till she was turned of five-and-twenty, and then had the choice of two or three husbands; but instead of pleasing her fancy, as she probably might have done at nineteen, she chose a man of business, that could keep her handsomely: and she hoped her niece Flora would do the same.— This was rather a mortifying speech to a man who was bred to no profession, and mortally hated business. I comforted myself however with the thought, that I could support Miss Williams in a style which she would be very well contented with, especially with a man

that

that she loved ; in which predicament I was coxcomb enough to consider myself. Poor Flora, however, looked down, greatly confounded at her aunt's abrupt declaration.

C H A P. XII.

AS I love to travel some miles before breakfast, I took my leave of the family the preceding night, and was up before six o'clock. But the hospitable Mrs. Williams, who had no apprehension equal to that of people's being starved to death, had risen herself, and roused her daughter, to make me some tea; with which piece of ceremony you may be sure I was not displeased.

While young Williams was getting his horse to accompany me a few miles,

miles, and the old lady was out of the room, I had a few minutes tender conversation with Flora Williams; and upon my expressing my apprehensions that her aunt would influence her to marry with a mercenary view, she assured me that, although she could never form any connection without her aunt's, as well as her father's and mother's approbation, nothing should force her to give her hand where she could not give her heart.—This, after what had already passed between us, I considered as a sufficient security of my interest in her affection.

On my taking my last farewell of Miss Williams, she hurried from me abruptly, and ran to her chamber;

but

but I saw her at her window with her handkerchief, and flattered myself that she had been wiping a tear from her cheek. But perhaps I was a dupe to my own fond wishes and fertile imagination.

Young Williams rode with me a few miles : and while we were chatting on the trifling incidents of the last three weeks, I enjoyed them again by reflection. But when he left me alone, the whole world, except the Golden Vale, appeared a desert to me ; and though I was going to an indulgent mother, whom I greatly loved, I found my tenderest regards more strongly attracted towards the lovely Flora Williams.

Nothing is more essential to happi-

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E

ness,

ness, than the regulation of our passions, and keeping them under the dominion of reason.—This is very true: but when reason approves of, and gives a sanction to, the indulgence of any one passion, as I flattered myself it did to my fondness for Flora Williams, we can taste no happiness when separated from the object of that passion.—This was my present situation. I was unhappy even in the company of a mother whom I loved, as I said before; and the company of indifferent people, and my former acquaintance in the neighbourhood, was not only insipid, but irksome.

For books I had no relish, except such poets or dramatic writers as described,

scribed, in impassioned language, the hopes and fears, and tender complaints, of anxious lovers.

If I found any amusement, it was of a very languid, or rather melancholy kind, and from objects in which I could never before take any delight ; I mean in strolling about the little farm which my mother kept in her hands, surveying her cows and oxen, and talking with the hind about improvements :—which not only revived the idea of the happy moments I had spent at Mr. Williams's in the Golden Vale, but was afterwards of some use to me, when I settled there for life.

In short, I merely existed, rather than enjoyed life, for the few months

which I remained with my mother; till it was convenient for me to revisit the Metropolis, whither young Williams wrote me word his sister had been returned with her aunt for some time.

CHAP. XIII.

AS Flora Williams had been too well instructed, to engage in a clandestine correspondence with me, I teized her brother continually to write to me, that I might at least get some occasional intelligence of the transactions of their family, and the occurrences of the neighbourhood. Amongst other things, he told me that the rector of the parish (the archbishop, as they called him) who had withdrawn into Ireland, had there, as he was a jolly, conversible man, got a

very good living, which of course would vacate his preferment in Wales; and that young Williams himself, by Mr. Hamilton's interest, had a good prospect of getting it; which being better than the generality of the benefices in the principality, would be a very comfortable addition to his family estate, whenever he came into possession of it.

Young Williams informed me, also, that as it was the two younger Miss Hamiltons turn to visit London this season, they would accompany their father to town early in the spring.

He added, that young Hamilton had received a letter from Sir Charles Highworth, who informed him, that
they

they had got as far as Montargis, in their way to the south of France; but that Lady Highworth was so ill, that he rather thought they must return to Paris for the winter, as she was not able to proceed on her journey.

Though I was all impatience to get to London, something still happened that prevented my setting out till near the end of March.

The morning after my arrival, as soon as ever I was properly equipped, I flew upon the wings of love into the city; the image of my dear Flora Williams, in all her blooming charms, glowing in my imagination. I rapped at the door, and was taken into a lower parlour, where I stood panting with

eagerness to see the object of my wishes,—when Mrs. Banks came down alone, and received me with a more gracious smile than usual. But upon my enquiring after Miss Williams, she said she was a good deal out of order, and had taken some medicine which confined her to her chamber.

You may guess at my disappointment and chagrin, when the old lady turned the discourse, and began talking with great alacrity about our friends in Wales, the Hamilton family, and every thing but the only subject which could possibly be interesting to me at that moment.

When I came away, Mrs. Banks followed me to the outward door, to prevent

vent, I suppose, my getting the least hint of intelligence from the servant.

I had not a doubt that there was some mystery in the case, but was quite at a loss how to unravel it.

C H A P. XIV.

AS I returned from Mrs. Banks's, wrapped in thought, and distracted with various conjectures, I passed by the merchant's in whose counting-house I remembered to have once or twice called upon young Scrip, the merchant's clerk; and suddenly recollecting what young Williams had told me, about Mrs. Banks's favouring his pretensions to her niece, I determined to go in.—He affected great satisfaction at my being come to town, and asked me whether I had called upon

upon Mrs. Banks since I came. Upon my answering that I was that moment come from thence, and that Miss Williams was confined to her chamber—he said, that he had heard nothing of them lately; that he went thither sometimes to get a dish of tea; but that Mrs. Banks was an odd sort of woman, and did not like to have young people come often, on account of her niece.

I made but a short stay with him; and when I was taking my leave, he said he had business at the west end of the town, and would walk with me. Though we went near a mile together, we were both equally reserved in speaking of Miss Flora Williams. When we came towards Fleet-street, I turned

into a court where my late uncle's housekeeper lodged, to pay her half-year's annuity; to which you may remember I told you my legacy was subject, and which I was obliged to pay very punctually, within a few days of the time when it became due. As I was knocking at the door, casting my eye towards the entrance of the court, I saw young Scrip had been watching me (though I could not suspect him of any motive but impertinent curiosity) to see the door that I stopped at; and never dreamed that he could make any use of such a circumstance. I stayed half an hour, and talked to her, and a niece whom she had with her, for whom I found she wanted a genteel

genteel service ; which I promised, if I had an opportunity, to procure for her.

The next day, I went again to Mrs. Banks's, to enquire after Miss Williams's health ; but was surprised at being told by the footman that she was not at home.—Not at home I said I ; why I thought she was very ill.—The fellow smiled ; and as I had given him a shilling now and then, he whispered, that she really was gone out with her aunt ; but that the old lady had ordered him, if she had been at home, to deny her to me. At this I was thunder-struck ;—but recovering from my surprise, I stepped to a coffee-house almost opposite, where I could see them

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if they returned—wrote the following card—and gave the servant half a crown, and desired him to give it to Miss Flora when alone, and deliver her answer when I called again:

‘For heaven’s sake, my dear Flora, what is come to pass?—Unravel this mystery; nor devote to misery—
—Your most faithful friend, &c.

‘E.’

I knocked at the door again the following day—was again told, that they were not at home—but the footman returned my own card, thus indorsed:

‘Consult your own heart; that will inform you whether your enemies have done you any injustice or not.’

‘B. W.’

I

I was

I was now convinced that some villain had traduced me; but could not guess upon what foundation, or with what motive, unless in favour of some rival candidate for Miss Williams's favour: and my suspicions naturally fell upon young Scrip.

I was utterly at a loss, however, in what manner to proceed. I at first thought of writing to young Williams, as I knew Mrs. Banks corresponded with the family, and would of course mention something of the affair; but as I could not have an answer in less than a week, I could not bear with patience so tedious a delay. In short, I was determined to write immediately to the aunt, and expostulate

late with her on the mysterious manner of receiving me ; and, as Flora Williams had hinted at some enemy having done me injustice, to insist upon knowing my accusers from Mrs. Banks herself ; though, you may be sure, without the least hint of the intelligence I had received. I accordingly wrote, and concluded with telling her, I would wait upon her the next day for my answer.

C H A P. XV.

WHEN I came to Mrs. Banks's, I was again received by herself alone in the lower parlour. I had not patience to be thus treated; and begged her, for heaven's sake, to let me know what I had done, that I was not admitted to the sight of Miss Williams?

After a short pause, she replied—
“Why, Sir, you cannot suppose that I have not observed the mutual attachment which subsists between you and my niece; and as she is
yet

yet too young to think of any nearer connection, it is certainly adviseable that you should have less frequent opportunities of conversing together, till she is at years of discretion, and more capable of judging what will contribute to her felicity for life."

"Madam," said I, "you must certainly have some more particular reason for denying me the privilege of a common acquaintance, at least, after my having been so long intimate in the family; and I am convinced that some officious friend of yours must have done me privately some ill offices, and caused this sudden alteration in yours and Miss Williams's behaviour to me."

"Why,

“Why, Sir, as to that,” says she, “you are a young man of independent fortune, and need not regard the ill-natured reflections that every one is exposed to. I suppose you spend your life in town as other young men of fashion do—sometimes at the tavern, sometimes at the whist table—and now and then, I suppose, you partake of the other pleasures and gaieties of the town.”

“Upon my word, Madam,” said I, “you have given me credit for accomplishments to which I have not the least pretensions. I never set up for a man of fashion, and never played or betted at a whist table in my life; nor can I guess what *pleasures or gaieties of the*
town

town you allude to.—But,” added I, with a serious countenance, and in a peremptory tone, “as I am convinced I must have been maliciously misrepresented to you, I must insist upon knowing your author.”

She then threw down a letter upon the table, and bade me read it; which, to my astonishment, contained the following intelligence :

That I was a very dissolute young fellow—that I was every night at the tavern, or at the theatre—that I not only kept a mistress (which matrimony might cure me of) but that I played very high, and had almost spent my fortune—that I should probably deny these charges; but that, if called upon,
the

the writer could prove each particular.—From a friend to the family, &c.

I read the letter over more than once, yet could see nothing which could possibly give me any light into the affair: but when I had folded it up, though it was sealed with a wafer only, there was a strong impression of a demi-lion rampant, with a sword in the dexter paw.

As I could recollect no acquaintance who bore that crest, I despaired of making any use of the discovery. However, after venting my indignation upon the diabolical author, and expostulating with Mrs. Banks upon the injustice of listening to the accusation of an anonymous assassin, against
one

one with whose character she had fairer means of being acquainted,—as I found I was not to see Miss Williams till I had in some measure wiped off these aspersions on my character,—I took my leave. But as my suspicions fell strongly upon young Jonathan Scrip, I was determined to call upon him again, as I thought he might unawares, either by his manner, or by some expression, suggest something that might lead to a discovery.

While I was considering what excuse to make for calling again upon one for whom I never had shewn much regard, my good genius inspired me with the thought, that I would beg the favour of him to lend me a sheet of paper,

per, and let me write a letter in the counting-house; and I then should have an opportunity perhaps of discovering the very seal that the writer of that infamous letter had made use of.

In short, not to be too tedious on this affair (which, though interesting to me, may not be so to you) when I had finished my letter, I took a wafer, and taking up the wafer-stamp, I saw it was only a cypher; another seal which lay on the ink-stand, I found was a coat of arms in a shield or scutcheon; but seeing an old rusty steel seal lie upon the writing desk, I took it up, and to my great joy discovered the very demi-lion of which I was in search.

As Scrip was busy in casting up their
books,

books, I lighted a bit of wax candle, and made the impresson in wax; and having thus far succeeded, I took an hasty leave, and said, I must find out a porter to carry my letter as directed.

no matter how soon as you can, and
 this matter (which, though interesting
 to me, may not be so to you) when I
 had finished my letter, I took a water
 and taking up the water-lamp, I saw it
 was only a copyist; another leaf which
 lay on the table, I found was a
 copy of mine in a shield of parchment;
 the feeling an old leafy leaf lie up
 on the writing-table, I took it up and
 to my great joy discovered the very
 edition of which I was in search.
 A lamp was duly in setting up their

CHAP. XVI.

I Returned immediately to Mrs. Banks's, gave a single rap at the door, and elated with the hopes of vindicating myself, the moment the footman let me in, I rushed up to the dining-room.—But guess how happy I was to find the idol of my soul, Flora Williams, alone! She was lost in a reverie; and at my unexpected appearance gave a shriek, which I was afraid would have ended in an hysteric. I ran to her, and embraced her with more freedom than I had ever done before; which she

almost instinctively returned with warmth: but immediately recollecting herself, with the stern air of discretion disengaged herself from me.—
 “My dear angel!” said I, “why do you frown upon me? ’Tis impossible you can give any credit to the anonymous assertions of that scoundrel Scrip, whom I have discovered to be the author of that infamous letter; and which I’ll make him swallow before my face, or recant every syllable of it, before to-morrow morning.”

Mrs. Banks now came into the room, and seemed surprised at seeing me there. But I immediately told her, that I had discovered my false accuser; of which, if she would again favour

me with the sight of the letter, I would immediately convince her.

I then desired her to look at the impression on the wafer : and when she had surveyed it a moment, I produced the same impression on my sham letter—assured her that I had made it from young Scrip's seal—and added, that it was an act of justice which she owed to me, to Mr. Williams's family, and to herself, to confront the evidence, and give me an opportunity of vindicating my character before her and Miss Williams.

Mrs. Banks replied, that she did not approve of anonymous letters ; but that by whatever channel the intelligence was conveyed, all that concerned

her was, to know whether it was true or not.

I answered, that I would soon convince her of the falsehood of every particular, if she would give me leave to meet Scrip that very evening, or whenever she pleased—That she need not be under the apprehension of any disturbance in her presence : but, as the writer says that he can give proof of his assertions when called upon—if he can do that, said I, there's an end of the affair—if he cannot, he shall ask pardon of you, Madam, for attempting to impose upon you ; and of me, for the irreparable injury he has endeavoured to do me with you and Miss Williams.

Mrs.

Mrs. Banks replied, that although she could hardly believe that a young gentleman of Mr. Scrip's *family* and expectations would be guilty of such a meanness, she had no objection to sending for him to tea; and if I would meet him, she would be glad to see me. She moreover asked me, if I would stay and take a family dinner with them: but I replied, that while I remained under the imputation and scandal of so bad a character, I was not proper company either for her or for Miss Williams; though I with difficulty brought myself to refuse so tempting an invitation.

C H A P. XVII.

AS I perceived Mrs. Banks was inclined to favour young Scrip, I was determined to be there before him; and got to her house about six o'clock. I found Mrs. Banks ready to receive us; but Miss Williams did not appear till near seven.

When young Scrip came in, he seemed a little disconcerted at finding me there. I took no notice of our business, however, till we were a little settled: I then pulled out the letter which I pretended to write in their counting-

counting-house, and observing that I had not yet sent it, looked carelessly upon the seal, and asked Scrip, whether that demi-lion was his crest? —“ My crest !” says he, a little confused, “ no, that’s an old seal of my master’s, that lies about the office.” — “ Then I suppose your master was some relation to Mrs. Banks’s correspondent,” said I : — “ pray, Madam, let me look at that letter which you shewed me.”

Scrip looked pale the moment he saw it : and, upon my asking him whether he knew any thing of that letter or not, he at first affected to wonder that I should propose such a question. But when I insisted upon a

direct answer, without any prevarication, he said he was not in a court of law, and that I had no right to examine him, nor would he give me an answer.

Mrs. Banks then interfered, and said there could be no doubt but he wrote, or at least dictated, the letter, which she before suspected.—But the most material circumstance was, what proof he had of the assertions contained in it.

In this stage of our trial, Flora Williams came in, as the servant brought in the tea and coffee. But Mrs. Banks being desirous of having our affair adjusted, bade the servant wait till she rang.

As

30 As I pitied and despised, more than
 I resented, this rascally behaviour, I
 endeavoured to relieve him from his
 embarrassment, by saying, that I could
 forgive him his motive for the sake of
 the object; especially as his endea-
 vours, I trusted, had proved ineffec-
 tual. But I insisted upon his inform-
 ing the ladies, what foundation he had
 for each particular of his charge.

70 As he had a very slender ground for
 each, it only gave me an opportunity
 of clearing myself, and triumphing
 over poor Scrip's malevolence.

90 In answer to his account of my
 spending my time in taverns, I only
 desired him to enquire at the coffee-
 house, whether I did not spend three

10

F 5

evenings

evenings out of six over a basin of
negus at Nando's.

As to my frequenting the theatre, I
pleaded guilty; for as I generally went
into the pit, I thought it the cheapest
and most rational amusement I could
enjoy; and accordingly spent frequently
two evenings in a week in that manner.

But I was astonished at the third
particular; and could not guess how
he would make out his charge of
my keeping a mistress. But I recol-
lected that the first time I met Scrip,
after seeing him at Mrs. Banks's, was
in Fleet-street, as I came out of the
court where I had been calling upon
my late uncle's housekeeper. And as
there was a little coffee-house (a place
of

of ill fame) in the same court, Jonathan, who judged every one from his own feelings, and had even then viewed me with a jealous eye, suspected that I came out from thence; and actually went and enquired, whether a gentleman (describing me) had not just then been there. The people of the house, who being bad themselves, would not allow their neighbours to be any better, told him that I was that moment gone out of the opposite house, where I frequently came; and where I *kept* that young woman who was sitting at the parlour window.—This to Scrip-
was,

———— Confirmation strong

As proofs of holy writ. ——— Onus 119:

As Mrs. Banks and Miss Williams knew my utter detestation of cards and all kinds of play, I took little pains to obviate this calumny.

As to the last, and in Mrs. Banks's eye the most important, article of my accusation, That I had almost spent my fortune — as this was entirely Scrip's invention, all the punishment I exacted from him was, to go with me to the Bank the next day, when I was to receive my half year's dividend in the three per cent. stock.

"And now," said I, "all that I require further is, that you acknowledge your mistake, and ask these ladies' pardon for the trouble you have given them, and the injury you have done me : and for

the future run fair ; get the start of me if you can, but do not kick up my heels, nor juggle me out of the course by any foul play."

Scrip looked silly, and said he begged the ladies' pardon for the trouble he had given them : but as he proceeded upon plausible appearances — when it was proved that he was mistaken, of which at present there was only my assertion opposed to his, he should then make a proper apology.

Mrs. Banks said, the young gentleman spoke very *properly* ; and as what he had done was, she hoped, with a good intention, they had no reason to be angry. — Finding, therefore, how partial she was to Scrip, for whom I
had

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had the utmost contempt, I thought it best to concern myself no more about him. And as Mrs. Banks had now no pretence to treat me with that distance which she had lately done, I had so far gained my point, and gave myself no further trouble on that head; especially as I saw Flora Williams appear with an air of satisfaction, and smile upon me as usual: and snatching an opportunity, as we were coming away, to squeeze her hand, she seemed to return it, as a token of *reconciliation*.

C H A P.

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CHAP. XVIII.

YOUNG Scrip and I were now received at Mrs. Banks's upon nearly an equal footing: but as the old lady was evidently a little partial to the young merchant, so I flattered myself that I stood fairest in Miss Williams's opinion.

It was now the end of April, when Mr. Hamilton and his two youngest daughters came to town.—Mr. Hamilton told me, as what he thought would be an interesting piece of intelligence, that the admiral's wife, Mrs. Bomb-

ketch,

ketch, was dead; and that he took it for granted the house, and probably the estate, would be sold, as he heard the admiral had taken an house in Bath, being frequently laid up with the gout: and he hoped that I would come and be their neighbour.—I assured him there was nothing that I wished more heartily; but, that it depended upon another contingency, which at present lay hid in the *womb of Fate*.—Mr. Hamilton laughed at the solemnity of my expression; and observed that I might have said, in the breast of the fair Flora Williams.—I was not displeased to have such an idea got abroad; but did not expect a man of Mr. Hamilton's delicacy to adopt an allusion of that kind.

—From

—From Mr. Hamilton I had also the satisfaction to hear that young Williams was presented to the rectory of the parish, a valuable Welch living.

It being a very forward spring, and Ranelagh Gardens to be opened on the first of May, Mr. Hamilton proposed making a party, and prevailed upon Mrs. Banks to attend the young ladies: and young Scrip hearing of it, prevailed upon her to let him be of the company. Mrs. Banks took Miss Louisa Hamilton, with herself and Flora Williams, in her carriage; and Mr. Hamilton, Miss Caroline: Scrip and myself went in an hired coach.

I took an opportunity of whispering
to

to Miss Caroline, and asking whether her brother had heard any thing more from the young baronet. She said not; but that it had some time since been in the papers, that Lady Highworth had died on the road, on their return from Paris.—This was probably whilst I was in the country, where I did not see the London papers.

It was the custom you know, twenty years ago, continued Eugenius, to go to Ranelagh by day-light, and enjoy the beauties of the gardens in the cool of the evening. The going *thither* when it is time to go *to bed*, is one instance of modern refinements, which is not agreeable to my ideas of pleasure, and the true enjoyment of life.

As

As it was a fine calm evening, and not much company arrived, we kept walking in the garden till it was dusk, and they began to light the lamps.—I contrived to get between Flora Williams and Miss Louisa Hamilton, and had engaged the former in a conversation about my purchasing the admiral's farm, if it should be sold: while Scrip kept changing his place from one to the other; and having never before been at Ranelagh, tried to engage their attention to the coloured lamps, and other trifling remarks upon the place; —when a young man in deep mourning, with his arms folded, and his hat drawn over his eyes, passed by us, close to Louisa Hamilton; who instantly

cried.

cried out, "Good God! Miss Flora, for heaven's sake let us go and sit down somewhere—I am ready to faint!" I caught hold of her; and as I was leading her to a seat, found her violently agitated, but could not guess the reason.—Mr. Hamilton, Mrs. Banks, and Miss Caroline immediately ran and joined us, and with surprise asked Miss Louisa what was the matter. "Nothing," said she; "I only thought I had seen somebody that I knew, but I was mistaken."

While we were talking, the gentleman in mourning came hastily back, as if he had recollected himself; and passed by the bench where we were sitting, eagerly surveying the whole party.

party. But it was now so dark, that he could not distinguish any of us at two yards distance; nor did we know him.

Not discouraged, however, the young man turned back again, and thrust his face close to Miss Caroline Hamilton's, who immediately knew him to be Sir Charles Highworth.—"Good God, Miss Hamilton!" cries Sir Charles, "how does your sister do? Is your brother here?"—"No, Sir Charles, but my father and sister Louisa are." "Did not your brother receive a letter from me last week?" said Sir Charles. —Mr. Hamilton now explained their situation to him; that they had been in town a fortnight, and had not
heard

heard from Wales since last week, but expected a letter by the next post.

Sir Charles then paid his compliments to Mrs. Banks, Miss Williams, and to me; and bowed civilly to young Scrip, whom Mrs. Banks was going to set off as a young man of great expectations; which was entirely unattended to by Sir Charles, who now dedicated his whole attention to Miss Louisa Hamilton. And as Mr. Hamilton observed that it was time to go into the rotunda, Sir Charles begged he might have the honour of being of our party.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIX.

AS soon as we got in, young Scrip pulled off his hat, and carried it in his hand: and as we walked the circle, he continually broke his rank, to give people room to pass by; and walked sometimes behind Mrs. Banks, and sometimes before the young ladies; and once or twice hooked himself on by his buckles to some lady's petticoats.

Sir Charles was soon joined by one or two of his fashionable acquaintance; and though our young ladies were all
elegantly

elegantly dressed, yet not having that easy, or rather that *undaunted* air, which young people who live constantly in public naturally acquire,—a smart young fellow, in a loud whisper, asked Sir Charles whether he had shewn his provincial cousins Sadlers Wells, and Cupid's Gardens *. Then joining Miss Caroline, he enquired whether she had seen the lions in the Tower.—“Yes, Sir,” says she, “and a great variety of strange beasts besides; but I saw no monkies there.”—“They are all gone to their country seats for the summer,” says he.—“No, Sir, the keeper told us they were so common

* Cuper's Gardens, so called by the vulgar at that time.

now at all public places, that they were no longer a curiosity.”—“So you think I am turned loose then to save the expence of keeping?”—“No, Sir, I am certain they would not have turned *you* loose; for, from what I have seen of you, you seem a greater *curiosity* than any of the savages from the deserts of Africa.”

“Well, Jack,” says Sir Charles, “how do you like my country cousin?”—“Faith so well, that I am in love with her already.”—“I am sorry I cannot return the compliment,” replied Caroline.—“Come, Jack,” said Sir Charles, “leave off while you are well: I knew Miss *Hamilton* had every other accomplishment; but these

sparks of satirical wit you have struck out by your rude encounter."

"Zounds!" cries the young man, in a half whisper, hearing her called Miss Hamilton, "I'll be hang'd if this is not your flame, that you are always raving about; and I am trespassing upon your manor."—"No, no," replied Sir Charles, "*win her and wear her*; you have sprung your game, and pursue her. I have *marked* my bird, and hope to take her before she is upon the wing."

The celebrated Miss —— now gave us a song, after which Mr. Hamilton proposed our retiring to a box to tea and coffee; whither we were attended by our two choice spirits. Mr. Fairfield

field (which was the other young man's name) sticking as close to Miss Caroline, as Sir Charles did to Miss Louisa Hamilton.

As young Jonathan kept close to Mrs. Banks, who sat with Mr. Hamilton on the opposite side of the box, I got Flora Williams next to Louisa Hamilton, and could not avoid hearing the conversation that passed between her and Sir Charles Highworth.

He said, that he had written to her brother to acquaint him, that if Mr. Hamilton would give him leave, and his visit would not be disagreeable to *Miss Louisa*, he would do himself the honour of spending a week with them at the South Rocks.

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“I hope,” says Louisa, “you did not join my name with my father’s, in that ridiculous manner! What have I to do with my father’s or my brother’s visitors?”—“You would not permit me to be *your* visitor then?” said Sir Charles.—“I shall always be happy to pay a proper respect to my father’s friends,” replied Louisa:—“but you had better stay and shew your *lady* the Golden Vale,” continued she.—“My lady!” cries Sir Charles, “if I ever have a lady, it shall be one that has lived these seven years in the Golden Vale.”

“Come, come, Sir Charles,” replied Miss Hamilton, “every one knows your connection with the great fortune,

fortune, Miss Richman; and that you only wait till she comes of age, to make her your lady."

"Every one that knows me," answered Sir Charles, "knows, that if Miss Richman had the mines of Peru or Golconda for her fortune, I would not marry her. While my mother was alive, I did not publicly declare so much, as I was unwilling to make her uneasy: but, now I am my own master, there is but one woman in the world to whom I would give my hand, or to whom I *could* give my heart," cries Sir Charles, with an emphatical tone; which made poor Louisa blush, but not with indignation.

As Mr. Fairfield now condescended

to talk with Miss Caroline in a rational manner, he found she could converse with him both politely and elegantly; and was not that pert, snip-snap, formidable Beatrice, which he at first had some reason to think her. And an attachment commenced from that evening, which terminated in their mutual felicity.

I took the opportunity of enquiring of Sir Charles, what was become of his friend Mr. Strickland, who came with him into Wales.—“Why,” says he, “Strickland was not content with *advising* me as a friend, but wanted to *rule* me like a master; and I have hardly seen him since we left North Wales.”—I afterwards heard, however,

that Mr. Strickland had some interested views in his zeal for his friend; and that, as he knew Sir Charles's determined resolution not to marry Miss Richman, he was in hopes he might have drawn him in to marry his sister, who was not without her attractions.

We went from Ranelagh before eleven; and were attended to our carriages by Sir Charles, and his friend Fairfield, who escorted the two Miss Hamiltons: and as Mr. Hamilton handed Mrs. Banks, and I Flora Williams, poor Scrip had nothing to do but clear the way; which he did so officiously, that he got involved with a link boy: and I was forced to leave

Miss Williams to herself, to rescue him from the scuffle.

The young baronet and Mr. Fairfield, after informing themselves of Mr. Hamilton's lodgings, wished us a good night, and returned to their company.

CHAPTER XX.

HAVING promised Mr. Hamilton to breakfast with him, I got thither before the young ladies were come into the room; and found him attentively perusing a letter, which he said his son had inclosed to him; and which, after smiling to himself, Mr. Hamilton desired me to read, and tell him my opinion of it.—It was to this effect:

“ Dear Hamilton,

“ I hope you will not judge unfavourably of the sincerity of my pro-

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fessions,

130 EUGENIUS.

essions, from my long silence. An anxious attendance on a much loved parent, and the melancholy termination of our journey to the Continent, have of late prevented my writing; but my friends of the Golden Vale are never out of my thoughts. If it is convenient, and your father will permit me—and if you think my visit will not be *disagreeable* to your *sister Louisa*, I will do myself the pleasure of spending a few days with you at the South Rocks.—Favour me with an answer as soon as possible, for I am all impatience till I see you and the rest of the family.

Yours, &c.

CHARLES HIGHWORTH."

“Well,” says Mr. Hamilton, “what is your opinion of this affair?”—

“Nay,” said I, “ask Miss Louisa her opinion of it; she is the person principally concerned; if *she* has no objection, nobody else, I think, can.”—I added, that I had made some enquiries about the young baronet, and heard an universally good character of him; and that he had a clear, unencumbered estate, and only one sister to provide for: and though I knew Mr. Hamilton was not fond of titles, yet no young lady would object to some little distinction in a public place; which a baronet’s lady would enjoy as well as the first countess in the land.

Mr. Hamilton then told me that almost his whole conversation with Mrs.

Banks, last night, was about me and Miss Flora Williams—That he found she was very partial to young Scrip: not that she had any other objection to me, but my being of no business or profession.

I told him that, if ever I was so happy as to be united to Miss Williams, I would certainly purchase some little estate in their neighbourhood, and farm it myself; as I knew it would be more agreeable to Miss Williams to live generally in the country. However I should some time or other have the house and estate which were settled upon my mother; and which indeed, if I could wish her to do it, she would at any time give up to me;—as, poor woman!

woman! she seemed to study nothing but to make me happy.

Mr. Hamilton added, that Mrs. Banks would give her niece three thousand pounds down, if she married to please her.—To which I answered, that with the ten thousand pounds, which I had in the funds, and what landed property my mother would immediately make over to me,—though Miss Williams certainly might command a larger fortune, I flattered myself she would be very well satisfied with the settlement I could make her.

The young ladies now coming into the room, put a stop to our further conversation on this subject.

As

As Mr. Hamilton made no scruple of communicating the contents of Sir Charles's letter to his daughter before me, I took the liberty to congratulate Miss Louisa on the conquest she had gained.—She made very light of the affair, and said it was only a piece of unmeaning gallantry;—that Sir Charles had been too much in the polite world, to have any serious intentions with regard to one in her style of life;—and that she herself was too young to think of any engagement of that kind.

I answered the first part of her speech by observing, that few young men of sentiment or virtue, as Sir Charles seemed to be, would chuse a
companion

companion for life amongst those young women of fashion who are hackneyed in the ways of the world, and slaves to pleasure and dissipation.— And Mr. Hamilton, in answer to her assertion of being too young to settle for life, said, he paid some regard to the vulgar maxim, ‘ Marry your son when you will ; but marry your daughter when you can.’—“ Your sister Anne,” said he, “ refused one or two suitable offers when she was of your age, because she was not in love with the young men that made proposals : and now perhaps she may sing ‘ Heigho ! for an husband,’ as long as she lives. Not that I would wish you to marry *merely* to get an husband : but if you like

like the man, and he can make you a proper settlement, and your friends approve of it, do not play the coquet; or refuse what every young woman should aim at, a comfortable establishment in the world."

"Well, Sir," said I, "Miss *Caroline* I hope will profit by your lecture, as *she* seems in a fair way to gain an *establishment* in the world. For Mr. Fairfield, Sir Charles told me, has a very good fortune in a neighbouring county to him; and though a little haughty and arrogant, from a flow of health and spirits, and the flush of youth, yet that he is a sensible and friendly young man—Miss *Caroline* said she would make him do penance, and bring down
his

his pride a little, for his treating her like a child that 'was come to town to see the lions.'

"Why," said I, "you suffered, I believe, by the awkward appearance of your company. I am sure no one could be dressed more elegantly than you young ladies were: but my good aunt Mrs. Banks, and her friend Jonathan Scrip, not to mention myself, though we added to the number, added little to the elegance of the party."

C H A P. XXI.

WHILE we were debating this matter, our conference was interrupted by the arrival of the gentlemen in question, Sir Charles Highworth and Mr. Fairfield, who came to enquire how the ladies got home, and so forth.

After a quarter of an hour's morning chat, Sir Charles asked Mr. Hamilton when he expected to hear from his son; and, upon being told that he had received a letter that morning, Sir Charles asked again, with eagerness, whether

whether he had mentioned the contents of his letter? Upon being answered in the affirmative, he blushed, and cast a look at Miss Louisa.

Mr. Hamilton then took Sir Charles to the window, and told him he should be glad to talk with him upon the subject of his letter as soon as he pleased. They accordingly fixed the next morning for that purpose.

The young gentlemen lengthened their visit till it began to be rather inconvenient. But Mr. Fairfield was attentive to Miss Caroline Hamilton, as his friend was to Miss Louisa; and if I had not first moved, they would have forgotten probably that Mr. Hamilton and I were not much interested in

in a conversation which was now become too particular.

The next morning, when Mr. Hamilton and Sir Charles met, Mr. Hamilton began immediately upon the subject of the young baronet's letter, and said he took it for granted that Sir Charles had some particular reason for mentioning his *daughter Louisa* on that occasion.

In answer to which, the young baronet acknowledged that his visit was principally intended to her; and, with Mr. Hamilton's approbation, to propose an alliance with a family, for whom he had conceived the highest esteem.

Mr. Hamilton replied, that he might suppose

suppose he should think himself highly honoured by Sir Charles's proposal, and made no doubt but it would be very agreeable to his daughter; but that he had at present many objections to make.—The young baronet looked greatly confused at this declaration of Mr. Hamilton's, but modestly begged to know his objections.

“Why, in the first place,” said Mr. Hamilton, “you, Sir Charles, and my daughter, are both very young; and though on meeting in that unexpected manner, where she appeared with some little distinction on account of her birth-day, you might have received some slight impression in her favour,—those impressions in youthful minds, believe

believe me, Sir Charles, are no more than traces in the snow; and are often effaced by the brighter eyes of the next pretty woman you meet."

"Why," said Sir Charles, "if I had only seen and danced with Miss Louisa Hamilton on her birth-day, and had had no further intercourse with her, so transient an acquaintance might perhaps soon have been forgotten: but the more I saw and conversed with her, the more I admired her; and am convinced I shall never meet with a woman so entirely calculated to make me happy for life."

"Well," said Mr. Hamilton, "these I believe are the sentiments of every young man in love. But, Sir Charles, there

there is an insuperable objection to my listening to any proposal of this kind from you, as you are under age; and your guardians are the proper persons for me to treat with:—and as my daughter is by no means a suitable match for a young gentleman of your fortune, depend upon it they will never consent to your entering into an engagement of this kind.

Sir Charles replied, that this objection would soon be removed; for that he should be of age in a month's time.

Mr. Hamilton still objected, that it was generally understood that Lady Highworth, his late mother, always intended a match between Sir Charles and

and Miss Richman, a very great fortune.—“And I hope, Sir Charles,” added he, “you would not act contrary to the will of so good a parent, though no longer in being to enforce her commands.”

In answer to this, Sir Charles assured Mr. Hamilton, that his mother, before her death, had given up that point, not only on account of his aversion to the match, but from other circumstances, which rendered it by no means an eligible alliance.

In short, this conference ended without any thing decisive; though Sir Charles flattered himself that he had refuted Mr. Hamilton’s principal objections, and that time would bring about the completion of his wishes.

Upon

Upon my looking at my watch, Eugenius took the hint, and said as it grew late, and he had been more minute in his account of Miss Louisa Hamilton's story than was necessary, he would reserve the further relation of that, and of his own affairs, till the next morning.

Accordingly we agreed to meet at his lodgings, when he promised to introduce me to the individual Flora Williams (now his wife) and her two daughters; who, he said, were almost of the age that their mother was at the period to which he had now brought his narration.

C H A P. XXII.

A Poet's mistress, or the heroine of a romance, seldom answers the sublime idea which has been formed of them from the descriptions of a warm and fruitful imagination. Prior's Chloe, Dr. Johnson tells us, was a mere dirty drab; and Werter's Charlotte is said to be now a very plain old woman in Germany.—Upon being introduced to Eugenius's Flora Williams, however, I was agreeably surprised to find her, though turned of forty, still in her bloom. She was inclined to grow large; but the neatness and

and elegance of her morning dress gave her almost the appearance of being the elder sister to her two daughters.—Eugenius could not forbear, during our breakfast, alluding to some particulars of their story, which raised a conscious blush in his Flora: after breakfast, however, she and her daughters were engaged to pay their duty to old Mrs. Banks, who was still alive and hearty: and on her account Eugenius brought his family to town every spring; which expence the old lady always made up to them.—When the ladies were gone out, Eugenius resumed his narration.

I did not see Mr. Hamilton again, said Eugenius, for three or four days; but calling upon him one morning, I

found him writing to Mrs. Hamilton, upon which I offered to withdraw; but he desired me to stay, as he said he wanted to consult me upon an affair, about which however he was already determined. Then laying down his pen — “Our plot begins to thicken,” continues he; “and I believe our comedy will end, as most comedies do, in marrying the whole Dramatis Personæ.”—Mr. Hamilton then told me that his eldest daughter Anne had acquainted her mother, that my friend young Williams had made overtures of love and marriage to her.—I started at this intelligence, and began to express my astonishment at my friend’s *presumption*. — “Presumption!” cries Mr. Hamilton, “why so? — Every
man

man of a liberal education is a gentleman—and with Mr. Williams's preferment, and the little family estate, which I find is near three hundred pounds a-year, is surely a Smithfield bargain for my daughter; to whom, as I have a pretty large family, I cannot give above three thousand pounds: and I assure you there is no character in life which I value more than that of a country clergyman, who acts worthy of his profession, and is beloved and respected by his parishioners, as Mr. Williams is. And as I find my daughter and he have long had a regard for each other, I entirely agree with Mrs. Hamilton in letting her please herself."

I was glad, on many accounts, to

find that Mr. Hamilton took this affair in such good part, as I had long suspected that Williams had a strong partiality in favour of Miss Hamilton;—and though she assumed rather more state than her sisters, as I observed before, I did not think her invulnerable by the shafts of love. All that I said to Mr. Hamilton on the occasion was, that Miss Hamilton had great merit in communicating the affair to her mother, and not taking any step clandestinely; and I was glad she was rewarded for her *frankness* by their consent.—“Why,” says Mr. Hamilton, “we have always made friends of our children, and accustomed them to act with that *ingenuous freedom* on all occasions. But, my friend

friend Eugenius," adds he, "I have a particular aversion to the word *frankness*; it hurts the gristle of my nose to pronounce it. Richardson adopts it from Steel; but Addison, I believe, never uses it: nor do I remember any author since lord Clarendon's time, till Sir Richard Steel, that does.—Excuse this trifling on so serious a business.

"One circumstance," continues Mr. Hamilton, "which reconciles me to this match is, that as I am fond of my children, the more I can fix in my own neighbourhood, the happier I shall think myself."

This I thought a very amiable principle in Mr. Hamilton, and applauded his paternal tenderness and affection.

C H A P. XXIII.

HAVING dined with Mr. Hamilton at his lodgings, we went in the evening to the coffee-house. As I was reading one of the evening papers, Mr. Hamilton interrupted me, by pointing out an advertisement in the paper which he was reading, to this purpose :

‘ To be sold by auction, some day next month, if not disposed of before by private contract, a desirable estate, in one of the most romantic vallies in North Wales; consisting of about 300 acres, with a good mansion-house, fitted up in an elegant taste,’ &c.!

In

In short, he immediately knew it to be the admiral's estate, which he had before informed me would probably be sold upon the death of his wife.

This was a very interesting piece of intelligence to me, and required some resolution to be immediately taken. Mr. Hamilton, therefore, was so good as to adjourn with me again to his lodgings; where, upon debating the affair for some time, I told him, that if I was so happy as to succeed with Miss Flora Williams, I would not hesitate a moment about making the purchase: but if by her aunt's perverseness, and her partiality for young Scrip, I should be deprived of the only woman whom I have so long considered as essential to my happiness, I could never think of

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spending.

spending my life in the Golden Vale, where every object would continually remind me of the loss which I had sustained, in being disappointed of Miss Williams.

Mr. Hamilton then very kindly observed, that the first and only step that could be taken was, for him to go, the next morning, and represent the affair to Mrs. Banks, and get a positive answer from her, what her intentions were in regard to Miss Williams: and he did not in the least doubt, he said, but that if she was only balancing in her mind betwixt me and young Scrip, he should easily determine her in my favour.

I then told him of the illiberal treatment I had met with in his anonymous letter;

letter; which so far provoked Mr. Hamilton, that he said if Mrs. Banks would encourage such a puppy to address her niece, she would quite forfeit his good opinion, and he should renounce all acquaintance with her for the future.

patient to excuse his commission, that he went early to Mrs. Banks, and desired a private conference. He explained her my first intention, in regard to the purchase of the animal's estate; and how necessary it was for me to have an immediate answer, as the case would not admit of any longer delay. She reported to him her former objections:—that although she liked me very well as an acquaintance, it had

always

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C H A P. XXIV.

MR. Hamilton entered so warmly into my affairs, and was so impatient to execute his commission, that he went early to Mrs. Banks, and desired a private conference. He explained to her my present situation, in regard to the purchase of the admiral's estate; and how necessary it was for me to have an immediate answer, as the case would not admit of an hour's delay.

She repeated to him her former objections:—that although she liked me very well as an acquaintance, it had
always

always been her resolution to marry her niece to a man of business; as young men who had nothing to do but to spend their fortunes, were too apt to live beyond their income, and distress themselves and families; which generally produced ill-temper and uneasiness, and rendered the married state unhappy.

Mr. Hamilton then told her my intention of employing myself in the management of my estate, if I bought it, which would be sufficient to keep a plentiful house; and the addition of what I should have left in the funds, and from my little family estate, when I should come into possession of it, would enable us to live in affluence, and

and provide for whatever family we might be blessed with.

Mrs. Banks had nothing to object to this, she said ; but entered into a panegyric upon young Scrip :—that he was bred to a very profitable business, and was heir to a very rich uncle ; and was a pretty, *modest, sober* young man.

Mr. Hamilton then lost all patience ; and said, he could not bear to hear such a little insignificant puppy put in competition with one that had had a liberal education, and had so long been known to the family :—that it was very uncertain what his uncle was worth, and whether he would leave half that he was worth to this nephew ; but, however that might be, he was certain

Miss

Miss Williams could never approve of a young man, that could be guilty of privately traducing the character of her brother's friend; one for whom he knew the whole family had a regard.

Mrs. Banks then said that her niece was very young, and that if she did not like Mr. Scrip, she would not force her to have him against her inclination, but she might wait till she met with one entirely agreeable to herself and to her friends.

Mr. Hamilton replied, that he and Mrs. Hamilton had long observed and been convinced that I and Miss Williams had a mutual attachment to each other; and as he took it for granted Mrs. Banks had adopted her niece with a view to augment her felicity, it would

would be a cruel thing to disappoint her in an affair so essential to her happiness:—that all the fortune she intended to leave her would not be a sufficient recompence for the injury she might do her in this respect.

In short, after debating the matter for near an hour, Mr. Hamilton almost brought her over to his opinion; though she would not give him authority to say, that she admitted of my asking Miss Williams's consent. He then left Mrs. Banks, but said he would call again in the evening to know her final determination.

Mr. Hamilton, as he returned, having business at the Bank, met accidentally with a stock-broker whom he had often employed, and whom he knew

to

to be acquainted with Scrip's uncle; and being full of my affair, could not forbear making some enquiries about him. His friend said, that old Jonathan was a rich man; but, besides two or three illegitimate sons of his own, he had two nephews, who gave him a good deal of trouble—That one of them was sent to the East Indies; and that the other was an apprentice to a merchant in the city, who (he said) was a chip of the old block; for that his uncle was forced to pay an handsome sum for him, the other day, to get rid of an affair with his master's maid, to whom he had promised marriage; and the girl proving with child (by the footman, as was supposed) swore it to young Jonathan Scrip, and claimed his promise

mise of marriage; but for about an hundred pounds was glad to take up with the man instead of young Jonathan.—This was an excellent discovery for Mr. Hamilton, of which he did no tfail to make a proper use to Mrs. Banks, who was so partial to this ‘modest, sober young man,’ and a youth of *such great expectations.*

C H A P. XXV.

MR. Hamilton interested himself so warmly in my success, that he returned to Mrs. Banks at tea-time, and renewed the conference before Miss Flora came into the room. He made no scruple of communicating to her the discovery he had made in regard to Scrip's character, as well as the other dependants upon the uncle's bounty; and, in short, made her confess that he could never be an eligible match for Miss Williams. He then urged my plea, with the warmth of a zealous friend, so effectually, that, soon after

Miss

Miss Williams came into the room, she told her the subject of their conversation; and asked her, in her blunt way, which she should prefer for an husband, me or Mr. Jonathan Scrip? Flora, of course, said she had never made that the subject of her meditations; but replied, with some spirit, that of all the men in the world she could never like young Scrip, who was neither a man of sense, nor a man of honour:—"and I am sure," said she, "his person will never recommend him to any woman, whatever his fortune may do."

"Well," said her aunt, "you know he is our acquaintance, and his master is a very respectable man; and we will say no more about him."

Mr.

Mr. Hamilton then asked Miss Williams, whether she liked the town or country best? She answered, that it was not a fair question;—that she certainly lived more agreeably with her aunt than she could do at home; but if her aunt lived in the country, she should probably be full as happy there as she was in town. For as she was born in the country, she should always retain a love for it, and particularly for the Golden Vale, where so many of her friends and acquaintance were so happily settled.

Mr. Hamilton had now gained every point, but leave for me to go immediately and gain Miss Williams's consent; which, before he left Mrs. Banks, he fully obtained.

Accordingly

Accordingly, the next day, I went, or rather flew on the wings of love, and found them both in the dining-room. I paid my respects to Mrs. Banks with great complacency; who, almost before I could speak to Miss Williams, very abruptly cried out, "Well, I suppose you two are already agreed, without waiting for my consent; I will leave you together to settle matters as you please."

Poor Flora blushed, but I believe was as well pleased as I was at her aunt's departure.

I now gave up the reins to my passion for Flora Williams; which she, being no longer restrained by a deference to her aunt's caprice, returned with an unreserved warmth of affection.

Upon

Upon my communicating to her my plan for purchasing and settling upon the admiral's estate in the Golden Vale, she expressed great satisfaction, and we soon came to a perfect agreement.

Not to be tedious—Mr. Hamilton, at my request, wrote to the lawyer at Shrewsbury, to whom we were referred by the advertisement. They asked six thousand pounds, but came down to five thousand guineas, and the purchase was made.

I now had the pleasure of seeing Miss Williams daily; and we frequently took sweet counsel together, and conversed in the house of her aunt as *friends*. I began to enquire when I might think of being completely
 10 happy,

happy, in possessing her as my sole and most valuable property.—Mrs. Banks said her own father should give her away, and her brother should perform the ceremony : and as she intended to go down about the end of July, as usual, I must wait with patience ; and in the mean time go before, and prepare the house for our reception. These terms I found, notwithstanding my remonstrances, I must necessarily submit to.

C H A P. XXVI.

HAVING now, by Mr. Hamilton's friendly interposition, continued Eugenius, brought my own affairs to this promising state, it is but reasonable that I should return to Mr. Hamilton's, or rather Miss Louisa Hamilton's, history.

Sir Charles Highworth had assured Mr. Hamilton that he should be of age in about a month's time; that is, about the end of June. But before that period arrived, an incident happened, which induced Mr. Hamilton

more readily to listen to Sir Charles's overtures.

Miss Richman, whose passions made a more rapid progress towards maturity than her understanding, was weary of being confined to the company of an old uncle and aunt, who had the care of her; and having made an acquaintance with a young officer, who was quartered at a neighbouring provincial town, she had eloped with him to the Continent, and was married; he finding sufficient charms in forty thousand pounds to balance the want of them in Miss Richman's person, temper, and understanding: as Sir Charles Highworth, on the contrary, wisely imagined he should be sufficiently recompensed for the want of a larger fortune by

by Miss Louisa Hamilton's personal charms and accomplishments, and the amiable qualities of her mind.

I had met Sir Charles Highworth and Mr. Fairfield two or three times at Mr. Hamilton's lodgings, since our meeting at Ranelagh; each of whom behaved with a sort of distant coolness to me, as my frequent visits there had something of an ambiguous appearance. But when my connection with Miss Williams was no longer a secret, I met with a very different reception from the young baronet and his friend.

Soon after Sir Charles became of age, he came in form to Miss Louisa Hamilton, and made an offer of his person and fortune. She told him,

that as long as her father and mother lived, they were the first persons to be consulted upon an affair of that importance to their happiness, as well as her own.—Sir Charles was tolerably well satisfied with this reply, and went immediately and offered Mr. Hamilton a *carte blanche*; who desiring the young man to reflect upon the difference of fortune between that which he had lost in Miss Richman, and what he could give with his daughter,—Sir Charles answered, that it did not merit a thought ;—that he had a clear estate, and only one sister to provide for ; who would have the whole ten thousand pounds which had been settled by his father's marriage writings, as a provision for younger children.

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In short, these preliminaries being soon agreed upon, Sir Charles returned with rapture to Miss Louisa, of whose consent he had little reason to doubt.

— She what was honour knew,

And with obsequious majesty approv'd

His pleaded reason. — MILTON.

Mr. Hamilton then told Sir Charles that they should leave town the next week; and if he did not repent of his bargain, they would be happy to see him at the South Rocks, to settle what remained to be done. And Sir Charles the next day introduced his sister to Miss Hamilton, who was a very agreeable young lady.

As our schemes now in some measure coincided, Sir Charles and I became intimate, and frequently con-

versed together. I was observing, one day, that chance had directed him to one of the most agreeable families in the kingdom: to which he replied, that it was chiefly what he heard and what he saw of Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton, that determined him to make choice of Miss Louisa for a wife; which might otherwise have been thought a rash engagement, upon so slight and accidental an acquaintance. But a young lady with Miss Louisa Hamilton's person, talents, and accomplishments, and bred under such a father and mother, says he, I was convinced must make any man happy.

It was now the end of June; and as Sir Charles had affairs of consequence to settle previous to his marriage, and

I was

I was to wait till the end of July before Mrs. Banks and Miss Williams would come down,—upon comparing notes, we found it would probably be about the same time that we should arrive at the summit of our wishes.

C H A P. XXVII.

I Accompanied Mr. Hamilton and his two daughters into North Wales:—and having completed my purchase of the admiral's farm and mansion-house, notwithstanding his puff, of its being fitted up in an *elegant taste*, I presumed to make many alterations. The high court-wall, in particular, which intercepted all kind of prospect from the parlour windows, I immediately removed; which gave me a fine sloping lawn down to the river, and a view of the hanging woods and hills which rose above its banks. The

inside of the house was fitted up with many peculiar conveniencies, particularly a work-shop furnished with every tool and utensil that could possibly be wanted in a voyage round the globe: to this, however, as it came partly within the purchase, I had no great objection. In short, after taking all the necessary furniture, and adding a few more ornamental and elegant articles, I found myself possessed of an habitation, with which I was certain Flora Williams would be very well pleased.

While I was amusing myself with decorating our future residence, the reflection that Miss Williams would approve of every thing I did, rendered me almost insensible of her absence. But I now began to calculate every

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hour, till their expected approach; when Mr. Williams received a letter, with the agreeable intelligence that Mrs. Banks and Miss Williams would lie at Shrewsbury the next night.

I set out with young Williams, the next morning, to meet them at the last inn upon the great road, and escort them to the Golden Vale. Mrs. Banks, to do credit to our nuptials, came down in her own carriage, and did not get to the inn till the middle of the day; so that we were there some hours before them.

The idea of Flora Williams always glowed in my imagination with the brightest lustre; yet when I saw her, after a month's absence, the original far surpassed the picture in my breast.

I handed

I handed Mrs. Banks out of the chariot, but could not forbear catching Miss Williams in my arms. She was in an easy linen travelling dress, which greatly became her; for the ladies had just then renounced the *green Joseph*, and not yet adopted the masculine *cloth* habit, or the butter-woman's great coat buckled round the waist, which I cannot but consider as an antidote to desire.

Having made a slight dinner at the inn, we set out, and got to Mr. Williams's by tea-time; when Mrs. Banks, as soon as she saw her brother, said she was come to deliver up her charge, as her niece was tired of living with her. This vulgar jesting raised some tender ideas in poor Flora, which

melted her into tears, and which her mother would have interpreted as ominous, but her aunt said they were tears of joy ; having no conception of the little apprehensions which every change of situation might occasion in delicate minds.

C H A P. XXVIII.

AS soon as we had breakfasted the next morning, we all of us took a walk to my new habitation, which on the whole was greatly approved of. But Mrs. Banks observed, that we should want a more elegant bed, for any stranger that might sleep with us; and as those things could not be made tolerably in the *country*, she would have one made by *her* upholsterer in London. Though I did not doubt but there were as good hands in Shrewsbury as in London, if they were as well paid, I did not think it adviseable
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to thwart our good aunt's generous intentions.

Young Williams and I now resolved to extend our walk to Mr. Hamilton's, and would have persuaded Flora to accompany us; but she found a reluctance to appearing with me on this occasion, as I told her our visit was to sound their intentions in regard to Miss Louisa's nuptials with the young baronet, by which she imagined our union was to be regulated.

When we came to the South Rocks, we found all the ladies (except Miss Louisa, who seemed to have slipped away) together with Mrs. Jackson, (Jenny Cradoc that was) apparently employed on different articles of
needle-

needle-work, preparatory to the approaching ceremony.

Mr. Hamilton came soon after into the room. Upon my enquiring when he had heard from Sir Charles Highworth, he said very lately; and taking me to the bow-window, told me that Sir Charles and his sister, and he believed Mr. Fairfield, would be there the beginning of the next week, and that they had fixed upon Thursday for the wedding-day; and he hoped I would prevail upon Miss Williams to keep his daughter in countenance.—I answered, that nothing could be more agreeable to me; and I hoped they would contrive to let my friend Williams hand Miss Hamilton up to the altar

altar at the same time.—“No,” said Mr. Hamilton, “she will not consent to that; as she is conscious she must appear in an inferior light to her younger sister, she chuses to defer it to some more private opportunity: and Mr. Williams will have business enough on his hands with you and Sir Charles Highworth.”

Having gained this information, as we saw the family all engaged, we made but a short visit, and returned to settle the affair with Miss Williams and Mrs. Banks: the latter of whom coming readily into the scheme, poor Flora thought it in vain to make any objection.

In short, continued Eugenius, not to dwell

dwell on each minute particular of this interesting subject, like our young ladies who write epistolary novels, and fill up half a dozen letters on the delicious occasion, it is time that I hasten to the conclusion of my story.

C H A P. XXXI.

EARLY on Tuesday morning, the day appointed, Sir Charles Highworth arrived, with a coach and two postilions, accompanied by his sister, Miss Harriet Highworth, and his friend Fairfield. He approved of the plan we had agreed upon; and only desired to add to the arrangement, that we might have the wedding-dinner in the Druid Hall, where he first had the happiness of seeing Miss Louisa Hamilton.

When Thursday morning arrived, Mrs. Banks took Miss Williams in her chariot to the South Rocks; and

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as old Mr. Williams was a plain man, and not used to the company of people in Sir Charles's style, Mrs. Banks begged Mr. Hamilton to perform the office of giving away Flora Williams, which he gladly accepted of. Young Williams and I walked to the South Rocks; and as Mr. Hamilton's house was but a very short walk from the church, the gentlemen went on foot, and packed up the five ladies in the coach, and Mrs. Banks and her niece in the chariot, as before.

At the church-yard gate, six of Mrs. Hamilton's female scholars met us, with baskets of flowers, and strewed the path to the church-door: which trifling circumstance I should not mention, but for a piece of botanical knowledge

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ledge which I had never attended to, but which Miss Caroline Hamilton pointed out to us.—Amongst the flowers there were a great many *variegated* roses; which, I found, were called *union roses* (as they unite the party distinctions of York and Lancaster) and were therefore emblematical of the marriage union. But the most useful part of the emblem is, that this union rose knows no *thorns*—

Flow'rs of all hues, and without thorn
the rose. MILTON.

Not to be more tedious—Sir Charles and I were happily united to the objects of our respective wishes: and in the Druid Hall, where we celebrated Miss Louisa Hamilton's birth-day, we now celebrated her and Miss Williams's wedding-

wedding-day. We had the same band of music; and though we had somewhat different partners, I cannot omit mentioning that Mr. Fairfield, who danced with Miss Caroline Hamilton,—and young Hamilton, who danced with Miss Harriet Highworth,—took them afterwards as *partners* for life; as young Williams did Miss Anne, the eldest Miss Hamilton.

After tea, leaving Sir Charles and Lady Highworth, to the company of their good friends at the South Rocks, Mrs. Banks carried off my lovely Flora to our own house at *Vallombrosa*, as an ingenious friend * of ours had named

* Mr. E—— of Sarum, who, with Mr. W——, are almost the only English gentlemen who have visited the monastery of *Vallombrosa* in the Apennines.

it;

it; whither I, accompanied by young Williams, joyfully attended them.

Though no English peerefs * had yet recommended separate beds to the new-married couples, yet my Flora's native modesty and exquisite sense so far regulated the delicacy of my conduct towards her, and secured the novelty of her charms and the constancy of my love, that after having lived together near twenty years in the utmost harmony and affection, I still think her the most desirable object in the world——

“*Who is that, whom you think the most desirable object in the world?*” cried she herself, opening the door at that instant.—“The Duchess of Devon-

* See Lady C——'s Letters to her Son.

shire," cried Eugenius.—"No, no; 'tis my countrywoman, the Duchess of Rutland," said I.—"Nay," says she, smiling, "if you are engaged with such grand company I'll leave you."—Then shutting the door again, Eugenius thus concluded his tale.

As I have endeavoured, in some measure, to imitate Mr. Hamilton's example, in which my friend Williams and Mr. Jackson also (who employs near four hundred people in different branches of his manufacture) concur, we have hardly an idle or vicious, and of course hardly a poor person, within some miles of the Golden Vale. And as I can venture to affirm the same of every neighbourhood where any branch of Mr. Hamilton's family is settled, it

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is incredible how widely the influence of that one example is extended.

In short, I am inclined to think that in several other parts of England, and even on the Continent, the same benevolent spirit and moral improvement are diffusing; and if the nobility, gentry, and clergy of this realm, and especially their wives and daughters, do nothing further to invalidate my system before my book comes forth, I trust I shall escape the ridicule of the public, if I venture again to express my hopes—That the next generation at least may see, if not the *golden age*, or paradisiacal state, yet at least the *silver age* of the world again restored.

F I N I S.



